

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 00801

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CU

SUBJ: FONMIN LIEVAN'S VIEWS ON CUBAN QUESTION

1. DURING A LUNCHEON MEETING ON JAN 23 AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE WITH AMBASSADORS VAKY AND MAILLIARD, FONMIN LIEVANO RAISED THE PROBLEM OF THE CUBAN SANCTIONS WHICH HAS BEEN A SPECIAL SORE POINT WITH HIM SINCE THE QUITO MF. DESCRIBING THE ISSUE AS ONE WHICH IS INCREASINGLY DISTORTING US-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS FAR BEYOND ITS INTRINSIC IMPORTANCE, HE CITED AS AN EXAMPLE THE SITUATION IN THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN WHICH HE SAID DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS THE LATIN AMERICAN CAUCUS HAD MET INFORMALLY IN ORDER TO AVOID HAVING TO INCLUDE CUBA IN ITS MEETINGS. THIS STRATAGEM HAD BACKFIRED, HOWEVER, SINCE CUBA HAD OBTAINED THE SUPPORT OF THE AFRICAN AND ASIAN BLOCS FOR THE ELECTION OF CUBAN NOMINEES TO UN POSITIONS, TO THE DETRIMENT OF LATIN AMERICAN NOMINEES. THE RESULT WAS THAT THE LATIN AMERICAN CAUCUS HAD RECENTLY DECIDED TO INCLUDE CUBA IN FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE LA CAUCUS.

2. LIEVANO SAID FAILURE TO LIFT THE CUBAN SANCTIONS WOULD EVENTUALLY RESULT IN THE RECOGNITION OF CUBA BY ALL 12 OF THE NATIONS WHICH HAD VOTED IN QUITO FOR RAISING THE SANCTIONS. HE ADDED THAT COLOMBIA HAD NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER TO FOLLOW VENEZUELA'S DECISION TO RENEW RELATIONS WITH CUBA.

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3. AS HE HAD ON OTHER OCCASIONS (BOGOTA 71), LIEVANO PROPOSED A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM WHICH INVOLVED A DECISION BY THE MFM IN BUENOS AIRES, CONSTITUTING ITSELF BRIEFLY AS OAS CONSULTATIVE ORGAN, TO ALLOW THE SANCTIONS TO BE LIFTED BY A SIMPLE MAJORITY VOTE AND THEN ALLOWING THE OAS PERMANENT COMMISSION TO VOTE ON THE MATTER. WHEN ASKED WHETHER HE KNEW IF ANY LA NATION PLANNED TO TAKE THE LEAD IN SPONSORING OR COORDINATING SUCH A MOVE AT BUENOS AIRES, LIEVANO AVOIDED A DIRECT REPLY.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH LIEVANO IS FOND OF HIS PROPOSAL AND FEELS STRONGLY THAT SOME SUCH ACTION IS NECESSARY TO PRESERVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OAS, HE APPEARS RELUCTANT TO TAKE THE LEAD IN MOVING FORWARD WITH HIS SOLUTION, PROBABLY AS A RESULT OF THE FAILURE OF HIS INITIATIVE AT QUITO IN CO-SPONSORING WITH COSTA RICA AND VENEZUELA THE PROPOSAL TO REMOVE THE CUBAN SANCTIONS. VAKY

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